

02332

1968/11/11



Department of State

TELEGRAM

38a

~~SECRET~~

2 9 3 0 Q

1968 NOV 11 AM 8:06 AM

00 RUEHC
DE RUALOT 13708/10 3161288
ZNY 66555 ZZH
O 111133Z NOV 68
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3306
STATE GRNC

Rostow

SANITIZED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NLJ 91-510

By *ju*, NARA, Date *6-4-92*

BT

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 1 OF 2 TOKYO 13708

NODIS HARVAN

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] NOVEMBER 9 CALL ON PRESIDENT THIEU

1.3(a)(5)

2. SUMMARY. THIEU WAS VERY ELOQUENT IN EXPRESSING HIS COMPLAINTS AGAINST USG. HE APPEALED FOR [REDACTED] UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFICULTIES FAC-
ING GVN. THIEU HAD AGITATED AIR THROUGHOUT CONVERSATION. [REDACTED]
GENERAL IMPRESSION WAS THAT IT WILL BE SOME TIME BEFORE A BREAK-
THROUGH TAKES PLACE ON THE PROBLEM. OPEN PARTICIPATION IN THE
PARIS TALKS. [REDACTED] SAID HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC REGARDING THE
SOLUTION OF THIS PROBLEM ON THE BASIS OF HIS CONVERSATION WITH
THIEU. END SUMMARY.

1.3(a)(5)
1.3(a)(5)

3. [REDACTED] OPENED THE INTERVIEW BY TAKING UP SEVEN POINTS:

1.3(a)(5)

1.3(a)(5)

1. NVN APPARENTLY SHIFTED ITS STRATEGY BY AGREEING TO THE PARIS
PEACE TALKS. THEREFORE, IN LIGHT OF THIS SITUATION GVN SHOULD ACT
TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS IN ANTICIPATION OF WHAT WILL FOLLOW.

2. WHILE [REDACTED] UNDERSTANDS THAT GVN HAS SOME COMPLAINTS, IT BE-
LIEVES THAT IT WOULD NOT BE BENEFICIAL FOR GVN TO GIVE IMPRESSION
THEY ARE BOYCOTTING THE PARIS TALKS. IF PRES. THIEU TAKES INTO
ACCOUNT THE MINUSES WHICH WOULD FOLLOW FROM BOYCOTTING HE WOULD
UNDOUBTEDLY CONCLUDE IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR GVN TO ATTEND THE
PARIS CONFERENCE AND TO THERE MAKE CLEAR GVN POSITIONS.

1.3(a)(5)

3. VN WAR HAS PROGRESSED FROM THE MILITARY STAGE TO A NEW STAGE
WHERE DIPLOMACY AND MILITARY OPERATIONS GO HAND IN HAND. NOW IS
THE RIGHT TIME FOR GVN TO LAUNCH A POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC OFFEN-
SIVE. IN THIS CONNECTION, GVN HAS THE SUPPORT OF MANY FRIENDLY

~~SECRET~~

COPY LBJ LIBRAR

~~SECRET~~

-2- SECTION 1 OF 2 TOKYO 13708, NOV 11, (NODIS/HARVAN)

COUNTRIES WHO WILL ASSIST WHICH IS QUITE FAVORABLE AS COMPARED WITH THE SITUATION OF NVN. THEREFORE, THERE IS NO NEED FOR GVN TO WORRY FOR IT HAS MANY FRIENDS.

4. POLITICAL SITUATION IN SVN WILL BECOME CRITICAL AFTER THIS NEW STATE IS ENTERED INTO. THIS NEW STAGE WILL INCLUDE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AS WELL AS MILITARY ACTIONS. NLF HAD A MUCH EASIER TIME DURING THE FORMER MILITARY STAGE, JUST CARRYING OUT MILITARY OPERATIONS, BUT IN THIS STAGE, NLF WILL FACE MANY NEW PROBLEMS, WHILE GVN WILL BE ENJOYING STRONG SUPPORT FROM FRIENDLY COUNTRIES IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FIELD. [] WOULD LIKE TO PLAY A CERTAIN ROLE IN THIS CONNECTION.

1.3(a)(5)

5. PRES THIEU HAS BEEN EMPHASIZING THE STRUGGLE AGAINST COMMUNISM. WE HAVE NOW REACHED THE TIME WHEN WE SHOULD FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNISM ON THE NEW BATTLEFIELD OF DIPLOMACY WHILE CONTINUING TO PURSUE THE MILITARY STRUGGLE.

6. REFERRING TO PRES THIEU'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PREVIOUS DAY (NOV 8) REGARDING GVN DESIRE TO HEAD DELEGATION IN PARIS, [] SAID HE IMAGINED THAT ANNOUNCEMENT HAD BEEN EFFECTIVE IN RALLYING SUPPORT OF VN PUBLIC OPINION IN REGARD TO PARTICIPATION OF GVN IN PARIS TALKS. [] ASKED IF PRES THIEU HAD ANY IDEA OF BREAKTHROUGH IN THIS SITUATION.

1.3(a)(5)

1.3(a)(5)

7. IF IN THE COURSE OF CONSULTATION BETWEEN USG AND GVN, THERE IS ANYTHING [] CAN DO TO ASSIST SOLUTION OF PROBLEMS, [] IS WILLING TO TAKE PAINS TO ASSIST.

1.3(a)(5)

4. PRES THIEU REPLIED AS FOLLOWS: HE SAID HE APPRECIATES [] POSITION. AS FAR AS US BOMBING HALT IS CONCERNED, THERE IS NO PROBLEM BECAUSE TARGETS FOR BOMBING IN NORTH WERE NO LONGER NUMEROUS. PROBLEM NOW IS PARTICIPATION OF GVN IN PARIS TALKS. USG ASKED GVN TO ATTEND PARIS TALKS UNDER "YOUR SIDE, OUR SIDE" FORMULA. PREVIOUS DAY (NOV 8) PRES THIEU HAD MADE A NEW PROPOSAL ABOUT THIS PROBLEM WHICH AMB BUNKER HAD JUST TOLD HIM USG WAS NOT ABLE TO ACCEPT.

1.3(a)(5)

5. PRES THIEU SAID GVN WANTS PEACE SAME AS USG AND EVERYONE ELSE. PRES THIEU WELL AWARE THAT BY NOT PARTICIPATING IN PARIS TALKS WORLD OPINION, INCLUDING THAT OF US, WILL BECOME VERY CRITICAL OF GVN. HOWEVER, GVN HAS STRONG REASON WHY IT IS UNABLE TO ATTEND SO-CALLED "FOUR-PARTY CONFERENCE" IN PARIS. REASON IS THAT IF GVN IS TO ATTEND PARIS CONFERENCE IN ITS PRESENT FOUR-PARTY FORM, MORALE OF GVN, MILITARY AND PEOPLE WILL COLLAPSE. AMB BUNKER SAID PARIS CONFERENCE IS THREE-PARTY CONFERENCE. HOWEVER, NVN AND NLF ARE REPEATING CONFERENCE IS FOUR-PARTY CONFERENCE. IF PARIS CONFERENCE IS THREE-PARTY CONFERENCE WHY DOESN'T USG DENY NVN STATEMENTS ABOUT IT BEING FOUR-PARTY CONFERENCE?

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-3- SECTION 1 OF 2 TOKYO 13708, NOV 11, (NODIS/HARVAN)

6. PRES THIEU CONTINUED AS FOLLOWS: WHILE USSR AND COMMUNIST CHINA ARE EXTENDING VITAL ASSISTANCE TO NVN, THEY ARE PUTTING NVN OUT IN FRONT AS THEY REPRESENTATIVE. ON OTHER HAND, USG, THE STRONGEST POWER IN THE WORLD, IS NOW DEALING DIRECTLY WITH NVN AND AS A RESULT OF THIS SITUATION GVN IS NOT IN FRONT WHEN DEALING WITH NVN. THEREFORE, NVN SAYS USG IS AGGRESSOR IN THE NORTH AND INTERFERING IN THE SOUTH, ETC. WHAT IS AT STAKE IS THE USG ATTITUDE TOWARD THE GVN AND USG POLICY ITSELF TOWARD THE GVN WHICH IS REFLECTED IN THYIATTITUDE. PRES THIEU SAYS HE CANNOT UNDERSTAND PRESENT USG POLICY WHICH IS NOT TO LISTEN FULLY TO GVN POSITION WHILE HAVING THE EFFECT OF SAVING NLF FACE. USG SAYS WE MUST LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF NLF BUT WHY DOESN'T IT LISTEN TO GVN VOICE?

JOHNSON
BT

~~SECRET~~

COPY LBJ LIBRARY



Department of State

TELEGRAM

~~SECRET~~

2 9 3 3 Q

1968 NOV 11 AM 8 29

00 RUEHC
DE RUALOT 13708/2D 3161230
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
P 111133Z NOV 68
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3307
STATE GRNC
BT
~~SECRET~~ SECTION 2 OF 2 TOKYO 13708

NODIS HARVAN

7. SINCE USG IS STRONGEST WORLD POWER, USG MIGHT WELL DEAL WITH USSR AND, IF NECESSARY, COMMUNIST CHINA BUT WHY IS IT NECESSARY FOR USG TO DEAL WITH NVN? PRES THIEU WOULD LIKE TO SEE NORTH AND SOUTH VN ON AN EQUAL FOOTING SEEKING SOLUTION DIRECTLY BY MEANS OF COMPROMISE. IN TALKS BETWEEN GVN AND NLF ARE NECESSARY, THEY CAN TAKE PLACE IN SAIGON IN INDEPENDENCE PALACE. SUCH LINE OF THOUGHT WAS NOT HEEDED BY USG IN PARIS SINCE MAY. PRESENT SITUATION IS VERY DIFFICULT AND IF EVERYBODY MAKE THEIR OWN PROPOSAL AND THE PROPOSALS ARE NOT AGREED UPON, WE MUST RESHUFFLE THE CARDS AND GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING. PRES THIEU CONCLUDED THIS EMOTIONAL EXPOSITION OF HIS POSITION BY ASKING [REDACTED] TO TELL HIM IF [REDACTED] HAD ANY IDEAS ABOUT THIS. 1-3(a)(5)

8. [REDACTED] ASKED WHY DOES THE PARTICIPATION OF NLF, IN WHATEVER FORM IT MAY BE, POSE SUCH A GRAVE HINDRANCE TO GVN PARTICIPATION IN TALKS? 1-3(a)(5)

9. PRES THIEU RESPONDED NLF OCCUPIES 20 PERCENT OF THE AREA OF SVN AND THEY WILL BRING NLF FLAG TO THE CONFERENCE TABLE. APART FROM THESE MINOR MATTERS, ACCEPTANCE BY GVN OF FAIT ACCOMPLI OF NLF ATTENDING CONFERENCE IN THIS MANNER WILL HAVE EFFECT OF PREDICTING THE FORMATION OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT INTO THE MINDS OF THE SVN PEOPLE AT LARGE.

10. [REDACTED] SAID THAT SUCH A REACTION ON THE PART OF SVN ROLE IS AT THIS MOMENT ONLY AN ASSUMPTION. THEREFORE, IF USG GIVES SOME KIND OF GUARANTEE TO GVN IN ADVANCE THAT USG WILL OPPOSE A COALITION WOULD GVN BE ABLE TO ATTEND PARIS MEETING? 1-3(a)(5)

11. PRES THIEU SAID PERHAPS USG WILL GIVE HIM SOME FORM OF GUARANTEE BUT SUCH GUARANTEE IS NOT IN ITSELF STRONG ENOUGH TO SOOTHE SVN PUBLIC OPINION. IF NLF ATTENDS PARIS TALKS, AND IF GVN ALSO ATTENDS PARIS TALKS AND IF NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE FOR A FEW MONTHS OR A FEW YEARS, SVN PEOPLE WILL FORM SOME TENDENCY IN WHICH THEY

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-2- SECTION 2. OF 2 TOKYO 13708, NOV 11 (NODIS/HARVAN)

WILL RECOGNIZE THE NLF AS A POLITICAL ENTITY IN FACT. AS A RESULT OF SUCH TENDENCY, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT OF SVN, WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT, WILL BE SOME KIND OF COALITION GOVERNMENT. ONLY SVN PEOPLE CAN UNDERSTAND SUCH PROBLEMS.

12. PRES THIEU SAID, "IF I AGREE TO ATTEND THE FOUR-PARTY CONFERENCE AT THIS TIME, THERE WILL BE A REVOLUTION IN SVN. I WOULD RATHER RESIGN MY OFFICE THAN HAVE TO ACCEPT THE FOUR-PARTY CONFERENCE WHICH IS IN CONFLICT WITH THE IDEALS AND POLICIES OF THE GVN. I DON'T THINK PARTICIPATION OF NLF IS A PROCEDURAL PROBLEM. THERE MAY BE A PROBLEM OF FORM, BUT THIS HAS DIRECT BEARING ON POLITICAL SUBSTANCE."

13. PRES THIEU SAID HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY USG OPENLY DISCUSSED SUCH A CRUCIAL PROBLEM FOR FIVE MONTHS IN PARIS. "I WOULD RATHER LIKE TO HAVE SEEN SUCH A PROBLEM DISCUSSED SECRETLY IN PHNOM PENH OR SOME OTHER APPROPRIATE PLACE AND IF NO RESULTS CAME FROM SUCH SECRET DISCUSSIONS THEN JUST BURY THE TALKS." PRES THIEU SAID THAT THEREFORE IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS PROBLEM IS NOT ONE OF "FACE" BUT OF SUBSTANCE ITSELF. HE HAD TO ENTERTAIN SOME DOUBTS ABOUT USG POLICY BECAUSE USG HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY ACCEPTING A FOUR-PARTY CONFERENCE SINCE START OF PARIS TALKS.

14. AT SEVEN A.M. ON NOV 1 US SIDE REJECTED GVN WISH THAT GVN WOULD LIKE TO NEGOTIATE ONLY WITH NVN TO MAKE CLEAR THAT GVN WOULD ACCEPT NLF PARTICIPATION ONLY AS MEMBER OF NVN DELEGATION. PRES THIEU SAID AT THAT TIME HE ASKED USG FOR A LAST CHANCE TO GO DIRECTLY TO NVN TO TELL THEM GVN WOULD ACCEPT NLF ONLY AS PART OF NVN DELEGATION AND USG REJECTED HIS PLEA. PRES THIEU SAID WE DON'T UNDERSTAND USG ATTITUDE WHICH LISTENS TO NVN AND NLF AND WHICH CLOSES THE DOOR AGAINST ANY NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GVN AND NVN. PRES THIEU SAID NOV 1 MEETING WAS LAST ACT OF NEGOTIATION BETWEEN GVN AND USG. PRES THIEU HOPED [REDACTED] NOW UNDERSTANDS WHY HE INCLINED TO DOUBT GOOD INTENTIONS OF USG. 1-3(a)(5)

15. [REDACTED] IN ATTEMPT TO EASE PRES THIEU'S TENSE ATTITUDE, REPLIED IN LIGHT MANNER THAT [REDACTED] DOES NOT DOUBT GOOD INTENTION OF USG. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS BETWEEN OCCIDENTALS AND ORIENTALS WHO HAVE DIFFERENT WAYS OF THINKING, MISUNDERSTANDINGS CAN ARRISE. PRES THIEU SHOULD BE AWARE OF THESE THINGS AND NOT OVERLOOK THE GOOD INTENTIONS OF USG. PRES THIEU JUST LAUGHED AND SAID NOTHING. 1-3(a)(5)

16. [REDACTED] SAID IF SITUATION CONTINUES AS IT IS NOW, THIS WOULD ONLY BE PLAYING INTO THE HANDS OF NVN PROPAGANDA. WE MUST AVOID THIS. WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT AT THIS STAGE IS SOLIDARITY OF FREE NATIONS BECAUSE PARIS TALKS ARE A KIND OF DIPLOMATIC STRUGGLE. 1-3(a)(5)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-3- SECTION 2 OF 2 TOKYO 13708, NOV 11 (NODIS/HARVAN)

WITH COMMUNISM. PROGRESS OF PARIS TALKS WILL NOT BE SMOOTH AND IT WILL TAKE TIME TO ACHIEVE SOMETHING. AT SAME TIME, [REDACTED] EMPHASIZED IT IS NOT FEASIBLE TO INSIST THAT USG RENEGOTIATE WITH NVN. THEREFORE, INSTEAD OF "RATIONALIZING" ABOUT THREE OR FOUR PARTY NATURE OF PARIS TALKS, PARIS CONFERENCE SHOULD JUST BE CONSIDERED "CONFERENCES AND PROPOSALS". [REDACTED] CONCLUDED "WHY DON'T YOU GO AHEAD TO PARIS AND MAKE CLEAR YOUR POSITION AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS?"

1.3 (2) (5)

1.3 (2) (5)

17. PRES THIEU RESPONDED THERE MIGHT NOT BE ANY SOLUTION OTHER THAN TO HAVE VARIOUS FORMS OF CONFERENCES. HE CONCLUDED BY REPEATING THAT IF NO PROPOSALS ARE AGREED UPON THEN WE MUST RESHUFFLE THE CARDS AND GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING.

18. [REDACTED] COMMENTED THAT HIS INTERVIEW WENT TWENTY MINUTES BEYOND ITS SCHEDULED TIME AND HE THEREFORE WITHDREW AT THIS POINT. HE SAID HE WAS REPORTING THE CONVERSATION IN DETAIL SINCE THE SITUATION WAS MUCH MORE SERIOUS THAN HE HAD ANTICIPATED. HE WILL SEE THE FOREIGN MINISTER AT FOUR PM NOVEMBER 11 AND REPEAT THE FOREGOING ARGUMENTS TO HIM.

1.3 (2) (5)

19. ASSUME DEPARTMENT WILL DESIRE REPEAT SAIGON AND PARIS.

GP-1. JOHNSON

BT

~~SECRET~~